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SONNETS

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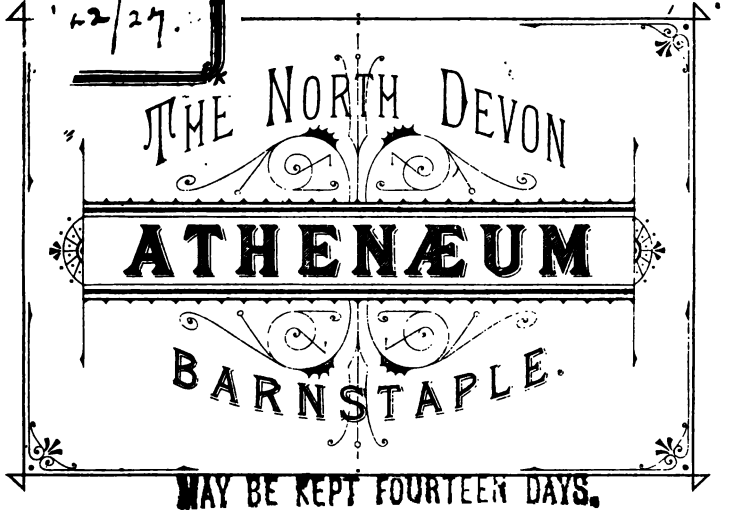

This Book may be Kept Fourteen Days.

FROM A BOOK FUND COMMEMORATING
RUTH GERALDINE ASHEN
CLASS OF 1931

It's a sad thing
when a man is to be so soon forgotten
And the shining in his soul
gone from the earth
With no thing remaining;

And it's a sad thing
when a man shall die
And forget love
which is the shiningness of life;

But it's a sadder thing
that a man shall forget love
And he not dead but walking in the field
of a May morning
And listening to the voice of the thrush.

—R.G.A., in *A Yearbook of Stanford Writing*, 1931

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MY

Greenwich:

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STOCKWELL

1842.

DEDICATION.

WHY DO I, C*****T, WISH TO SEE YOUR NAME
COMPANION OF THESE PRINTED WORDS OF MINE?
BECAUSE FULL WELL I KNOW THE WISH WERE THINE
TO SHARE WITH ME THE GLADNESS OR THE SHAME
THAT I MAY REAP FROM THEM. YES, STILL THE SAME
AS IN OLD YEARS GONE BY, THUS WILL WE TWINE
OUR PLEASURE, IF APPLAUDED; STILL REPINE
TOGETHER, IF WORDS, TRUE THOUGH HARSH, SHOULD BLAME
AS SELF-LOVE WHAT, TO US, COOL JUDGMENT SEEMS.
LONG HAS MY LAUGH BEEN ECHO TO YOUR OWN
IN THE OVERLEAFED GREEN LANES AND BY THE STREAMS
OF OUR OWN KENT; AND RUGGED WALES HAS KNOWN
OUR MINGLING VOICES MANY A PLEASANT DAY,
WHERE HER WILD ROARING FALLS HER RIVERS TOSS TO SPRAY.

May 29th, 1843.

MY SONNETS.

TO THE SONNET.

THOU chronicler of fleeting thoughts, in thee
Find shelter from oblivion and a home
My, else swift-dying, fancies, as they come
Up from the mind's abysses. Thou to me
A visible enduring memory
Shalt be; for thou, I know, art never dumb
When I demand of thee my thoughts. In some,
Perchance in all, the stranger's eye shall see
No thing that worth the treasuring may seem,
Yet in the lucid amber of thy line
Still will I shrine them,—still devoutly deem
That they are lovely, since they all are mine.
Sweet Sonnet! my winged thoughts O treasure still;
I love them, let the world think what they will.

November 15, 1842.

AN INVOCATION.

COME, Memory, whisper of the deathless dead,
The doers of great deeds in time no more.
Come, bright-eyed Spirit, who, in years long fled,
From Mulla's grassy haunts, bad'st Spenser soar
To worlds more fair than mortal eye e'er saw;
Who, by sweet haunted Avon's murmuring stream,
Cam'st down to dwell with him whom all adore,
World-worshipped Shakspere, and, in many a dream,
Didst bid, his fixed dilated eyes before,
Clad in the garb of frail mortality,
The stormy passions rise, people, once more,
With thronging forms, for me, void vacancy.
Come, winged Imagination, come, for me
Call up the buried past—bid that which is not Be!

November 30th, 1841.

THE ANCIENT MYTHOLOGY.

THEN fancy, as religion, loved to fill
The earth with shapes of beauty: in the air,
In the blue foaming sea, dwelt shapes as fair
As their sweet dwellings. Lingering shadows still
Haunt with their presence many a Grecian hill,
Making the lovely lovelier. None are there
To bow in their majestic temples; ne'er,
With choral song and linkëd dance, to kill
The stately flower-enwreathëd milk-white steer,
Now godlike youths and daughters of the earth
Go bounding up, awe shadowing, as near
The porch the long procession draws, their mirth.
O fair belief, though reason scoffs at thee,
Still thou the poet's faith must ever be.

November 26th, 1842.

APHRODITE AND ZEUS.

O SOUL of beauty, thou art veilëd now
To all but lone imagination's eye
When dreams, not of the earth, are wandering by.
Of thy divinity discrownëd, thou,
The thought of whom the stony knees could bow
Of the old demigods of earth, Zeus, high
Throned o'er the thrones of heaven, the majesty
That silent sits upon thy awful brow
Crushed to thy feet the greatest sons of her
Who shares the life of words that cannot die.
Sea-sprung Dione—Thunderer—what ye were
Ye are not! yet from out the memory
Of earth ye shall not pass, for man hath given,
In stone, an immortality to heaven.

May 2nd, 1843.

ATHENS.

CITY of Gods unworshipped,—of a race
The dread of nations once and now their scorn,
In thee barbarians and not Greeks are born.
The wisdom of thy godlike finds a place
Of rest in lands that saw the savage chase
The flying deer, what time thy streets were worn
By feet that made them holy. Why hath gone
Thy greatness from thee? Shame, why hath it place
Where glory throned itself sublime of yore?
Why in thy marble fanes doth ruin dwell,
And Genius tread thy Academe no more?
Hark! from the past, sad voices, answering, swell,—
Bucklered with right from hosts we victory tore;
Battling for unjust ends we, conquered, fell.

ATHENS.

TREAD reverently the holy streets they trod,
The great of that great land: still, through the night
Of bygone time, comes, flashing down, the light
Of their undying glory. Many a God
Hath now no worshippers, whose awful nod
Shook the green isles of the Ægæan; white,
In ruin, gleam, on many a rocky height,
Their mouldering temples, and the emerald sod,
Above the pavements of their shrines, is green.
Stars of the past, the Gods ye bowed before
Have changed with you their nature: earth hath seen
You grasp their immortality. No more
Zeus reigns in heaven—Poseidon rules the sea,
You men adore through all eternity.

November 21st, 1842.

MARATHON.

"GREAT king remember Athens!" From this day
Thy crouching slaves, each morn, shall need no more
To bid thee think of her. By the seashore
Of Marathon the flashing sunbeams play
On golden arms, the pomp of thy array,
The gorgeous ranks that Datis leads to war.
Hark! drowning in their battle-shout the roar
Of the Ægæan, fiercely to the fray,
With fiery speed, rush, t'wards their glittering foe,
The iron ranks of Athens: on they pour
Like ocean's billows when the north winds blow.
Thy Persians, like their foam, are swept before
The charge. Rejoice thou everlasting sea,
Ye heavens lift up your voice, the earth is free.

November 27th, 1842.

SPERTHIES AND BULIS.*

BEGIRT by Persian guards, the Spartans came
Before Hydarnes' throne. There stood the two
Who, when in the assembly shrilly blew
The blaring trumpets, and, with loud acclaim,
The herald's voice, in Lacedæmon's name,
From her hushed citizens demanded, "Who
Would die for Sparta," rose, and calmly through
The silent crowd passed on the doom to claim.
"O Spartans, why the friendship of our king
Reject ye? Look around, all that your eyes
Behold is mine; nor will your service bring
Less pomp or power." "Satrap, thou slave, be wise!
Go, learn how sweet a thing is liberty.
Life then too wilt thou spurn: the dead are free!"

November 26th, 1842.

THE TEN THOUSAND IN SIGHT OF THE EUXINE.

THE sea! the sea! from earth the mighty shout,
Rending the flying winds, to heaven upsprung.
The gazing throng of armëd thousands flung
Their exultation high. Not louder out
Roared, thunder-voiced, their joy, the stormy rout
Of wild-eyed, maniac, winds, what time, among
Its mountain gorges, Taurus' echoes sung
The Pæan of the Winter. Round about
The circling summits in the joy rejoice
Of man. From the eternal cliffs the sound
To heaven goes, bursting, up. Exulting voice,
The listening sun hears, lightning-paced, on bound
From crag to piny crag. The Greek is free.
Shouts the glad earth, the mountains shout, "The Sea!"

August 15th, 1843.

* See Note A.

DEMOSTHENES.

THY wingëd words were rushing winds that tore
And lashed to stormy fury the hushed sea
Of breathing life beneath thee. Fitfully,
Rending the silence, the tempestuous roar
Of voices, bursting forth, rose wildly o'er
The mighty multitude,—" O still be free,
Ye men of Athens! In Thermopylæ,
Died the three hundred; on the ocean shore
Of Marathon, did your forefathers pour
Their blood, like water, that their sons might be
Chainless; that Greece—that Athens—never more
Might know the foot of the enslaver. See,
Is not yon Salamis? Will ye before
The tyrant crouch?"——Loud bursts the cry, "To war!"

November 21st, 1842.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

'T WAS not the old hereditary hate,
That Greeks to the Barbarians ever bore,
That led the hero from his land's green shore
To trample on the Persian. That his fate
Glory might halo,—that renown might wait
Upon his memory,—he victory tore
From battling Asia: for this, victor, o'er
The fertile plains of many a mighty state,
Hid in the depths of the far East, he led
His conquering armies. Eloquent of him
Still are the battle-fields he heaped with dead,
The lands he filled with groans, for that wild whim.
Nor grow the nations wiser: still they crown,
As great, those who earth's happiness hunt down.

November 18th, 1842.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

DID the Gymnosophist, who laughed to scorn
The greatness of the mighty victor, speak
True wisdom, when he told the conquering Greek,
Glory was but a dream; that his fame, torn
From death, 'mid warring hosts, which he had gone
Through the far East, down trampling the weak,
The tottering thrones of Asia, but to seek,
And grasping it alone, doomed earth to mourn
A thousand happy hearths made desolate;
That this, and that all fame, the truly wise
Held worthless as the pomp of kingly state:
That man true greatness even should despise?
No! though vain all, that we most thirst for, seem,
Let us dream on, if it be sweet to dream.

November 18th, 1842.

LUTHER.

NOT from the mighty of the earth, O Lord,
Dost Thou choose forth the doers of great deeds.
He who, writ in the fate of nations, reads
Thy wondrous will, he knows that Thou, O God,
Hast, from the lowliest by whom earth is trod,
Called men to rear on high, or shatter, creeds;
Hast raised men, from those whom the earth nought heeds,
To hurl to dust those who the world o'erawed.
No sceptred king, whose nothingness grows great,
Seen through the mist time-honoured custom flings
Around his form,—no thing of courts and state
Was he who humbled Rome's cowled Kings of Kings.
The monk went forth—his arms, Thy Word:——Before
Those gods of earth the nations bowed no more.

March 30th, 1842.

LUTHER'S DISCOVERY OF A BIBLE AT ERFURTH.

DREAD moments are there in time's lengthened flight,
And yet they pass unnoted by mankind,
When deed-creating thoughts, in some great mind,
Start into life, and stand unveiled to sight;
Thoughts, heralding such wondrous deeds, that, might
The nations ope their eyes—no longer blind
To what futurity enfolds—and find
Man's destiny deciding, the dread sight
Would, from their minds, all other thoughts outblot,
And make the gazers into marble grow.
Such a time was it—but earth knew it not—
When fate bade him, who trampled on Rome, throw
His glance upon the book he had not sought.
He read——the fetters fell from human thought.

July 14th, 1842.

'T WAS worthy Laud, for 't was a bigot's thought,
That mighty nations roused themselves to rear,
Above the empty forms they shattered, mere
Vain forms as empty, when all Europe fought
The fight of conscience against Rome, and brought
The reason first to war with power, nor fear
The dungeon and the stake, for what more dear
Men held than life, for what they set at nought
The rulers whom, in any human cause,
They had crouched down to in the very dust.
Men burst Rome's fetters not that earthly laws
The soul might shackle still: aside they thrust
Those, who had seen earth tremble at their nod,
That none might stand between them and their God.

November 22nd, 1842.

THE EMIGRATION OF THREE THOUSAND PURITANS FROM NORWICH TO ESCAPE THE PERSECUTION OF LAUD.

WHY is the sound of sighs and mourning heard
In thee, fair Norwich? Why doth yonder crowd,
With slow, sad, lingering footsteps, bid, aloud,
Thy streets give back their sorrow? Not a word
Comes from yon weeping mother, yet is stirred,
Even to its very depths, her soul. Down bowed,
With tears, she leaves her infants' birthplace: proud
Is his stern eye on whom she leans. They gird
Themselves to quit the homes they love so well;
For faith, their little ones, with tottering feet,
Go forth. From where their fathers loved to dwell,
Their boyhood's haunts, and each familiar street,
Go forth the staff-supported steps of age,
To serve their God in peace,—to 'scape the bigot's rage.

November 27th, 1842.

THE VESSEL, BOUND FOR AMERICA, DETAINED BY CHARLES I, HAVING ON BOARD PYM, HAMPDEN, AND CROMWELL.

WHAT one bark ever held within it freight
So priceless as the one that vessel bore?
Not that which wafted, to Spain's sunny shore,
Earth-conquering Cortez, and full many a mate,
With all the plunder won, through blood and hate,
By hellish deeds, by strength of will that saw
The might of man and nature plant before
Their march the plumed array of many a state,
The pathless swamp, the tangled forest, where
No foot of man had ever forced its way,
Unawed, unblenching; they, unmoved, could dare,
Gods in endurance, on, for such a prey,
Forwards to press, down trampling pain and fear:
Yet nought they, homewards, bore worth that which lingered here.

November 28th, 1842.

THE PARTING OF PYM AND STRAFFORD.

"ADIEU, we yet shall meet in yonder hall:"
With that they parted. Little Wentworth thought
With what a ghastly meaning they were fraught,
Those farewell words—the last that Pym let fall
In friendship. Never more the stirring call
Of liberty assailed, those, who had fought,
Through perilous years, amongst the foremost, brought
To battle, side by side, again for all
That makes the freeman glory to be free.
They parted——One, the path that he had trod,
From his youth upwards, still, unswervingly,
To tread,—for freedom, and the right his God
To freely serve to strive. The other's way,
Through power, hate, the thronged hall, to the red scaffold lay.

November 11th, 1842.

ELLIOT.*

ELLIOT, no lapse of years the chains should burst
That thy name fetter to our memories.
Thy glory, England, as her own, should prize;
For thou, in evil days, stood'st with the first
Who strove for liberty, nor from the worst,
When the storm raged, wouldst shrink. What if thine eyes,
Gazing through prison-bars at the blue skies,
Grew blind with tears,—if thou the tyrants curst
Who shackled thee: thy bitter tears flowed more
From thoughts of thy land's bondage, chained in thee—
Ay, rather didst thou burning curses pour,
Because men dared to treat, as slaves, the free,
Than because thou, thyself, couldst feel the breath
Of the free winds no more, till freedom came with death.

November 8th, 1842.

See Note B.

ELLIOT.

On calmly, through the dungeon's prisoned gloom,
On, through the agony of death, he came,
Treading the road to a world-honoured fame,
A fame that shall not die, until the doom
Of old forgotten nations shall entomb
The tongue that Milton wrote in,—the great name
Of England,—and their deeds whose godlike aim
Was deathless life; and, till the past consume
All the world treasures in its memory
As worthy most for coming time to know,
Still shall the father, while around his knee
His children gather, teach them what they owe
To Pym and Elliot, and shall, ending, pray,
If evil times be nigh, that his sons be as they.

November 11th, 1842.

STRAFFORD.

The lust for selfish glory, not the thirst,
Through good report and evil, still to be
The bulwark of the people, first made thee
Disdain not, in their cause, to dare the worst—
A leader among those who strove to burst
The bonds of thought and conscience. Thou couldst see,
In the enduring praises of the free,
In greatness by the despot only curst,
Nought to outweigh vain titles, pomp, and power;
Not, wisely, didst thou choose as Marvel chose:
To rule thy fellows through life's little hour,
Fame didst thou spurn, and sting thy friends to foes.
If in us pity kindle at thy fate,
'Tis trodden out by, scarce unholy, hate.

November 27th, 1842.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

YES, thou wert doomed long ere thy brows had worn
The regal circle—ere thy sire, before
Her crouching whom the kingly queen, in war,
Shattered upon the ocean, made men mourn
For murdered Raleigh, for the fetters worn
By thought, an infant, loosely, more and more
Galled the young giant as it grew, and sore
It felt the cankering irons that had torn
Into its mighty limbs, at length, their way.
It must have burst its bonds, have hurled thee down,
And rent its struggling jailers, though all they
Who baffled thee,—though he who tore the crown
From thy weak grasp, thou hadst not stayed in hate.
What puppets are we in the hands of fate!

November 28th, 1842.

CROMWELL.

THE nations quailed before thee, and the name
Of England, in thy life, was honoured through
A world that feared the power full well it knew.
No more, as in the time of kings, they came,
The corsairs of Algiers, to write, in flame,
And in the English blood of those they slew,
A tale that fain we would believe untrue;
Still does, and will, its ever-damning shame,
Foully, the glory of the first Charles blot.
Thou wert not, like the tyrant, never meek
But to thy taunting foes. Thy name was not
A thing of terror only to the weak—
The dread of those who owned thy rule, alone.
But England crouched again——Charles filled his father's throne.

November 13th, 1842.

MILTON.

SUN in the heavens of glory! thy pure fame,
Like Israel's guide of fire, should light the way
Of nations in their onward march:—they stray,
Stumbling, in darkness. O that men would aim
To tread thy path unswervingly!—Thy name
Should be the watchword for all those who pray,
Watching, amid the starless night, for day,
That earth may yet be free,—England the same
As thy pen would have made her, when, to free
From senseless calumny her cause, thy sight
Thou didst lay down,—for thy land's liberty,
Welcoming unutterable, endless, night.
Thou sightless Sampson, thy free words crushed thee—
They crush thy foes through all futurity.

November 8th, 1842.

MARVELL'S REJECTION OF THE BRIBE.

MARVELL, that single deed of thine shall write,
Upon the memories of men, thy name,
Until th' eternal sun of Shakspeare's fame
The darkening earth shall see go down in night,—
Till thy land's language shall be, to the sight
Of those who dwell upon the earth, the same
As the old characters cut to proclaim
Deeds done in the world's childhood, when the light
Streamed down in mighty cities that are not.
Wiser in this than England's wisest, thou
Didst welcome poverty to be thy lot,
With lofty independence joined; and now,
Weighing, against thy living glory, gold,
Who, for the worthless dross, would sell what Bacon sold?

November 13th, 1842.

DEFOE.

THOU lesser Milton! as to him, to thee
Belongs a double glory. Thou didst dare,
That thought and conscience might be, as the air,
Chainless—that speech, within thy land, might be,
Like the wild winds or stormy billows, free,
Welcome foul calumny, unearned, and share
The prisoner's heart-sickness. Thou didst bear
The savage insults of the pillory;
Thy hands' hard, honest, earnings, through life, see
Torn from thee in that holy cause. We shrine,
For this, thy name with those that liberty
Loves to repeat,—names greater far than thine,—
Whose fame shall wither not till memory wing
Her way from earth, but know a still enduring spring.

November 15th, 1842.

WASHINGTON'S SALE OF HIS NURSE.

LIKE night, across the sunlight of his fame,
Comes that one deed. Who does not grieve, that he,
Who struck the fetters from futurity,
And else, unblasted by the touch of shame,
By godlike deeds, had glorified the name
Of man—who fronted death for liberty,
And, foremost, battled his own race to free,
Stamping his glory wheresoe'er he came,—
That Washington could sell her, in whose breast
He nestled in his careless infancy?
Blush!——he, who made the forests of the West
The home of homeless freedom, her, whose knee
Rocked his young eyes to slumber, calmly sold,
Bartering earth's greatest name for worthless gold.

November 7th, 1842.

MAKANNA.*

CAMPED in the land their ruthless bands had made
A smoking desert, for awhile, to slay,
The christian desolators ceased; that day,
Their bloody hunt for men, the heavens forbade;
That day, the white man's sword, the tempest stayed.
The houseless, hungering, savage ceased to pray,
In vain, for mercy. Out from where he lay,
Crouching within the tangled brake's deep shade,
With lofty tread, the Prophet Chieftain came.
Erect again, in native majesty,
He stands; he thinks upon his warriors' shame,
And fierce fire kindles in his rolling eye.
Can his arm shield his tribe, fast falling? No.
Yet peace his life may buy——he stalks towards the foe.

November 26th, 1842.

NAPOLEON AT THE TOMB OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

AWAKE! Arise! why slumberest thou below,
Thou terror of the nations? In the gloom,
The dusky twilight, that enshrouds thy tomb,
Stands one who dares to call thy land his foe,—
One who hath trod on Prussia. Wak'st thou? No.
In peace thou sleepest with thy glory: whom
The earth hath dreaded, share with thee the doom
That tracks alike the lofty and the low.
What didst thou for thy race? War, and the woe
That waits on war, dwelt on the earth with thee;
Thy tread made desolate fair lands, and so
Thy memory darkens. And shall thy name be
Upon the tongues of men, when earth shall know
His fame no more?—Go, ponder, conqueror, go.

November 17th, 1842.

* See Note C.

HAYDON'S NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

In the lit ocean sinks the setting sun;
From thy lone prison-isle, across the main,
Thou, whose own sun shall never rise again,
Watchest its darkening splendour; thou hast run,
Like it, thy course of radiant glory. None
Gazed on thee, once, with eyes undazzled. Vain
Of thy earth-shadowing name, they hugged the chain,
Thy nation, mad with freedom, lately won
By deeds that shall for ever damn to fame
The memory of Frenchmen. Thou didst crown
Thy brows, with thine own hands, with cold disdain.
As the red sun of Austerlitz went down,
Kings crouched before thee, in the dust: and, now,
What thoughts are in that calm, discrownëd, brow.

November 15th, 1842.

LONDON.

LONDON, what mighty memories people thee,
Haunting thy every street, unmarked by men!
If they, who, blindly, pass them by, might see
Thy shadowy habitants, in awe, oft then
Would they like lifelike, breathless, statues grow,
Gazing on those would bid thought sleep no more,
Or, in mute adoration, bow as low
As piety e'er bends its knee before
Th' Eternal; who thy greatest dwellers heeds,
To whom the many-peopled earth upsends,
From all its differing tongues and jarring creeds,
One mighty hymn of praise that never ends,
But, while each race of earth its voice to praise them lends,
With every passing age, with loftier swell ascends!

November 27th, 1841.

WRITTEN ON READING SILVIO PELLICO'S IMPRISONMENTS.

1

TEN years have gone, ten long, long, weary, years,
With all their slow, slow, miserable, hours,
Since, Silvio, the dungeons dark, now hers
Who rules fallen Venice, clasped thee—since thy ears
Heard first, while, round thee, horrid, shapeless, fears
Came thronging, such as the bold spirit cowers
To gaze on, dying off, 'mid those dark towers,
The clash of closing doors, which whoso hears
May hope abandon, and, with fixed, dull, eye,
Welcome despair, or woo salt, blinding, tears,
Thinking of the green earth, the sweet blue sky,
The sunshine that, dulled, through the black bars peers,
And leafy woods of June that shadow o'er
A thousand free wild flowers, that he may see no more.

November 16th, 1842.

2.

IMPERIAL jailer, this devotes thy name
Throughout the future, through eternity,
To be a bye-word in men's mouths,—to be
So base, that, when they seek to damn to fame,
To endless, black, unutterable, shame,
A brutal tyrant's bloody memory,
They shall rank him next only but to thee
In their deep, holy, hatred—may its flame
Consume, in man, all pity. Not in vain
May molten words its withering fire proclaim.
Curses cling to thee. Thee, for the disdain
Of ages, as her own may memory claim.
And thou, meek captive, may thy glory last
Till infamy, his name, shall weep to blast.

November 17th, 1842.

WRITTEN ON READING THE FOREGOING SONNET.

YET let me look upon those words again,
The words of hatred, I have dared to trace.
Alas! alas! how often, in the place,
Where, in the calm of reason, we were fain
That love, all-clasping love, alone should reign,
(Such love as would enfold, in its embrace,
All life, created, in deep joy, to pace
The ever lovely earth, or, the vast main
And the pellucid depths of air, to cleave,
With gladness, still renewed) our passions throne
The hatred that we bade, for ever, leave
Our thoughts. O come again, sweet love, to own,
For evermore, an undivided sway:
Come, rule my erring thoughts—come, guide my onward way.

May 29th, 1843.

MY books! my books! your very names my tongue
Dwells on with love. How have I welcomed each
Of you with trembling joy, such joy as speech
In vain would syllable! How have I hung,
When came some new-found stranger you among,
For hours, upon his name alone! The beach
Of the Atlantic, thus, he, who dared reach,
O'er seas where never the wild winds had sung
To sleep the wandering mariner before,
The far world and the islands of the West,
Columbus, loved to pace, while, from the shore,
His fancy fled, alighting but to rest
When o'er the spicy Indian groves it came.
Thus, through the unknown thoughts, I launch me from the name.

November 14th, 1842.

FROISSART.

HEAVEN rest thy soul! old Chronicler, farewell.
I grieve not that the days of chivalry
Sleep with thee, though meek Christianity
Harnessed herself, in radiant arms, to dwell
Among the nations, mercy still to tell
To those whose lust was war, who longed to be
Amid the crash of spears unendingly,
Drowning the shrieks of agony, the hell
Of sounds that from the warring hosts arose,
In what, to them, was sweeter than the sigh
Of lady fair, the yell of flying foes,
And the tempestuous shout of victory.
Reason rejoices, but, o'er where they sleep,
Comes fond imagination still to weep.

November 14th, 1842.

DEFOE.

WELL may men bless thee. On, we, voyaging, go,
Through life, and over sleeping summer seas,
Our track foredestined seldom lies—the breeze
Not often wafts us gently on—we know
Little of calm and sunshine here below:
Yet, for a time, the wanderer finds ease,
Though storms rage round him—yet, unmoved, he sees
The gathering tempest o'er him gloomier grow;
He hears the rustling trees sigh, whispering, o'er
Crusoe's lone isle,——no more he heeds the flight
Of the swift hours; pain, poverty, no more
Shadow his way; with ever new delight
He watches the lone seaman's life, and hears
His tale with hopes and smiles and pleasant, pitying, tears.

November 14th, 1842.

DEFOE.

AMID the oceans of the earth may dwell
Isles, than the one we love, perchance, more fair.
Green are the Cyclades, that cluster where
The Ægæan foams, the blue waves love them well;
And they, whom Indian seas have tossed, can tell
Of isles, that sleep, in golden sunshine, there,
By tall palms shadowed from the withering glare
Of the fierce tropic sun, that none excel
In loveliness: yet the earth holds not one
Imagination loves so well to tread,
As that where thy lone Crusoe dwells; through none
Wander the thoughts so oft, by memory led,
Delightedly. To thee earth's dwellers owe
Renown that dies not, for that tale, Defoe.

November 15th, 1842.

BUCKHARDT READING ROBINSON CRUSOE TO HIS ARABS IN THE DESERT.

SILENCE sat throned in darkness—not a sound
Broke the deep slumber of the starry night,
Save that, at intervals, lost to the sight
In the deep gloom that seemed to press around,
Some courser, neighing, made yet more profound
The stillness of the Desert; fitful light
Shot up from the red fire, and lit the white,
Enfolded, tent at times; upon the ground
Sat one, who, from a far-off, western, land,
Had journeyed, and had donned, a Frank no more,
The sheepskin and the turban; on the sand,
Half hidden, lay wild swarthy forms, that wore
The Bedouin's garb: he read, aloud, the book,
And the blaze, streaming up, showed joy in each dark look.

November 16th, 1842.

ABOVE dominions, high o'er sceptred kings,
Man thrones the poet. The far-flashing sun,
Whose dazzling majesty the eyes of none,
Of mortal birth, dare look on, as it flings
Its noontide splendour down, and, forward, springs,
Its course, down the blue slopes of heaven, to run,
Lights up yon sea of mist, that, one by one,
Buries the mountain tops, and the fair things
That make earth lovely, till the white waves gleam
With hues as rich as in the rainbow dwell;
Splendour fast fleeting. Yonder flashing stream
Of golden mist shall pass, and nothing tell
Its being.—Kings are yon fast-darkening sea;
Poets the suns of far futurity.

November 7th, 1842.

1

THE Poet, ponder, in what differs he
From all who share, with him, the common name
Of man? Are not their faculties the same?
To both is given, alike, the eye to see
The nameless beauty, and the majesty,
That robe, in wonder, the revolving frame
Of this fair earth, and those bright hosts that came,
In glory, at his call who bade them be.
The beauty scattered round us, day by day,
To the outward eye is visible alike
Of all. The voices, that around our way
Are ever murmuring music, do they strike
Unheard the outward ear of any? No.
In what then differs he from all below?

June 16th, 1843.

2

THE Poet, in what differs he from all
His fellow dwellers in this goodly earth?
In this,—heard, day by day, even from our birth,
At length the melodies of nature fall
Unheeded on our ears; unanswered call
Her thousand voices, murmuring of mirth,
Or melancholy, to us; for no worth,
We learn to think, have common things. We wall
Ourselves around with thickening apathy,
Till on the robing of the earth we throw
Eyes blinded to its beauty,—till we see,
Unmoved, whatever earth or heaven can show;
And, coldly, owning all is passing fair,
Yet fail to feel the glory glowing there.

June 16th, 1843.

3

THE Poet, in what differs he from all
His fellow rulers of the subject earth?
In this,—that, even from his very birth,
The thousand voices that, in music, call
To man from nature, on his ear will fall,
Each time but waking in him wilder mirth,
Or deeper sadness, than before. Their worth
Things common hold with him: use may not wall
The least of them from out his wondering love
And wordless admiration. He will gaze
Upon the heavens, in glory spread above,
Upon the teeming earth, with such amaze,
With such deep, soul-felt, awe, as if before
His eyes their beauty never wandered o'er.

June 16th, 1843.

4

THE Poet, from his race how differs he?
Unlike is he, in this,—he has an eye,
All quick, to mark the beautiful, past by,
Unnoted, by his fellows. Novelty
Must startle their dull senses, for they see
The marvellous not in the things that lie,
For ever, day by day, their footsteps nigh.
Not so with the true poet can it be:
To him the beautiful is never veiled,
The wondrous never hidden. Through his days,
As when, with wild rejoicing shout, he hailed
Their beauty, startling first his childish gaze,
He parts the weeds that lowly violets hide,
Or to the gentle daisy turns aside.

June 18th, 1843.

5

How differs he, the Poet, from all those
Who breathe with him, alike, the common air?
He has an ear to drink delight in, where
The mass of men hear nothing. Music flows,
For him, from all created things. We close
Our ears to customary sounds and fare,
All heedless of them, onwards, yet, even there,
In the most common, by that, wandering, goes,
Nor wakes a thought in us, for him there lies
A meaning and a marvel. Still, around
His way, are voices that in mirth arise,
Or pour their gushing sorrow into sound;
All, do all things, winds, woods, the sounding main,
Invoke, with them, to feel,—him, call they not in vain.

June 19th, 1843.

6

FOR him there is a rapture in the breeze
That kisses, to a glow, his pallid cheek,
What time the morning wakes. Words may not speak
The love he bears to the green haunts of trees,
And the warm, gleaming, sunshine, that he sees
Glancing, through shadow-shielding leaves, to seek,
Amongst the chequered grass, the wild flowers, weak,
With pining for the out-shut light. Birds, bees,
Young laughing flowers, and dancing leaves, he makes
All life-long sharers of unchanging love.
The roaming clouds, the sounding winds, he takes
Even for familiar friends. High prized above
All sensual pleasure, solitude has grown
Peopled for him, companioned when alone.

June 19th, 1843.

7

THE Poet, in what differs he from those
Who share with him the feelings of his kind?
In this,—In him doth nature ever find
A heart that, while it throbs with life, o'erflows
With love, deep, ever-springing, love. He knows
No joy so sweet as that which is entwined
In that of others, for his feelings wind
About their own so closely, that their woes
Become to him more moving than his own.
To him the voice of ringing laughter 's sweet:
He hears the sigh to echo it alone.
Thus lives he in all life. No thing can meet
His eye too lowly for his smiles or tears.
Through him the listening world the heart of nature hears.

September 24th, 1843.

WRITTEN ON SHOOTER'S HILL.

1

I STAND upon thy summit: in my ear
Thy leafy woods make dreamy melody,
As the unresting winds go, whispering, by.
Ye circlers of the earth, on high, I hear
Your many voices; on, like startled deer,
Through the pellucid fields of air, ye fly,
As if ye, shrieking, fled, unendingly,
With lightning speed, some fast-pursuing fear:
And thus, to the rapt ear, for ever speak
The thousand tongues of nature. Thus, he dreams,
Who wanders, far from human haunts, to seek
Her presence, that the winds, the woods, the streams,
The elements, deep joy or sorrow feel.
O that my voice might tell all they to man reveal!

November 10th, 1842.

2

THE voice of leaves, the music of the trees,
Rustles around me. Winds go, wandering, by,
In quest of the fair clouds that quiet lie,
Basking in golden sunshine; the soft breeze
Tracks their white feet, where'er their steps it sees,
Along the deep blue, sapphire-paven, sky,
Rending their misty garments, as they fly,
While clamour, loud as bursts from summer seas,
When zephyr wakes their waves, resounds on high.
Stretched in the soft, warm, grass, 'neath shadows flung
Down from the over-arching woods, I lie,
Gazing on all that Nature's Poet sung,
And while, o'er the wide landscape, roam my eyes,
Thoughts, that wake not in peopled cities, rise.

November 9th, 1842.

WRITTEN IN GREENWICH PARK.

1

In this tall avenue of rustling trees,
This leafy home of solitude, to bask,—
(In acted smiles, not needing here to mask
My face, where nature actual pleasure sees),
To couch me, warmly, thus, with pleasant ease,
In earth's green mantle,—free from every task,
Sweet Spenser to companion, or to ask,
As, peeping, through the lifted leaves, you go,
Thus, whisperer to the whispering boughs, young breeze,
The meanings uttered by your soft, low, voice,—
Outstretched, these voiceful chesnuts, thus, below,
In the deep joy of all things to rejoice,—
Than these delights no greater do I know;
Of all sweet pleasures these should be my choice.

September 17th, 1843.

2

Earth sleeps, o'ercome with gladness. Hark! around,
The rustle of the leaves you scarcely hear,
And scarcely falls, upon the listening ear,
The dew of melody, the rain of sound,
That, o'er his nested dwelling on the ground,
(By him remembered whether far or near,
Amid the wilderness of clouds, still dear),
Yon skylark, that the eye, at length, has found,
In the blue depths of heaven, shakes down through air.
The louder voices of the earth are dumb,—
The tongues of heaven are mute. Hark! everywhere,
Unstartling, silence walks, save, when up come
Songs, drunk with joy, from where, in golden shade,
The shrill grasshopper pipes beneath some tall grass blade.

September 17th, 1843.

WILD FLOWERS.

THE earth would grieve without you, sweet wild flowers!
On many a mossy bank ye, sleeping, lie,
In the green forests' depths, till, far on high,
Above the leafy woods, the fair, young, hours,
From out the eastern, amber-clouded, towers
Where dwells the sunrise, past come, dancing, by,
Up leading dewy morn, through the blue sky,
Amid the laughing clouds, where sleep the showers.
Through your night-closëd leaves ye, watching, peep,
And, when the golden sunshine, flashing, streams
Down through the lofty tree-tops, from their sleep
Ye wake your folded leaves, and beauty gleams,
Stars of the earth, from where you, lowly, dwell,
Up on the wanderer's eye. Wild flowers I love you well.

November 18th, 1842.

TREES.

YE bless the earth with beauty. Laughs not spring
To see your emerald leaves peep, from the night
Of their dark, wintry, cells, in to the light
Of the warm, gleaming, sunshine. Trees, you bring,
Over the deserts of far seas, the wing
Of many a sweet-voiced bird, whose weary flight,
From you, was taken ere the snow lay white
Upon your leafless branches. How they sing!
What gushes of delight they pour around,
When once, again, within their summer home,
They smooth their ruffled plumage! Oft the sound
Of your green, murmuring, boughs, the winds, that roam
The wide earth, love to wake. My blessing be
On him who plants upon the earth a tree.

November 18th, 1842.

MOURN for the leaves, the infants of the spring,
Whose prattling tongues made sweet the woods of May.
Ye, playmates of the breezes, oft would they
Steal from their fellows, the rough winds, to wing,
With joy, their way to your green haunts, and sing
A thousand pleasant melodies. How gay,
From the light, dreaming, rest in which ye lay,
At their low call, ye woke! how, then, would ring
The airy halls in which ye dwelt! O'erhead,
Your laughter swept the sapphire-vaulted sky,
Till the young, listening, clouds forgot to tread
Their journey, onwards, through the heavens, on high.
Ye, merry dancers of the woods, are gone,
And through the leafless trees, for you, the sad winds mourn.

November 24th, 1842.

MOURN for the leaves, that the white clouds of June,
So merrily, to the soft winds' low song,
With lightly glancing feet, untired, along
The boughs saw dancing, till the sultry noon
Silenced the breezes' melody, and soon
Lulled them to pleasant slumber, couched among
The soft, warm, golden, sunshine. How I long
Again to see the white beams of the moon
Steal down, with voiceless footsteps, through the night,
To gaze upon their sleeping forms. No more
They shield the shadows from the flashing light,
Or spread their emerald mantles, warmly, o'er
Their shivering forms, that, all unsheltered, now,
Crouch from the freezing winds beneath each thin, bare, bough.

November 24th, 1842.

WRITTEN IN KNOWLE PARK.

1

How lovely is the earth! The bright-eyed spring,
Through the green woodlands, bounds with mirthful May;
Around her dance the hours, and lift away,
From the young flowers, the emerald veils, that cling
Around their bursting beauty. All things sing,
From the young winds, that through the tree-tops play,
To the bright breeze-kissed leaves, and streams that stray,
Bubbling of joy, from mossy fount and spring.
See, the sweet sunbeams, from their bright home, wing
Their way, through the blue heavens, from star to star;
Now, lighting on yon wandering clouds, they fling,
Around their fleecy forms, such hues as are
Seen, with their beauty, zoning the sunrise,
Or arching o'er the storm in April's dewy skies.

October 21st, 1842.

2

How lovely is the earth, though spring has fled,
With the bright colours of her young, green, leaves,—
Though the piled shocks of amber-tinted sheaves
Stand in the reapëd fields of corn, instead
Of the green blades that erst the winds would tread
Into the likeness of a sea, that heaves
Beneath the breezes' footsteps. Summer leaves
No trace of her sweet being—she is dead:
The shrill-voiced winds pipe her sad dirge, and mourn
The falling of the leaves, alas! grown old.
Yet is the earth most lovely. Not have gone
All the light dancers of the boughs; like gold
They gleam upon the trees, that seem, each one,
Robed in the livery of the burning sun.

October 21st, 1842.

ANSWER, ye glorious worlds that tread in light
The abysses of unfathomable space,
Whose lightning-sandalled feet, unerring, trace
Your paths appointed, through the shoreless night,
From unbeginning time,—who, on the sight
Of suns earth knows not, flash,—say, ye bright race,
Ye wanderers of the heavens, hath joy no place
In your existence? Earth, thou whose young flight
Eternity alone beheld, on high,
Above me, hark, below and from around,
Thy thronging voices come, the horrid cry
Of the torn cataract,—the mighty sound
Of rushing winds,—the roar of seas,—speak they
Not passions, fiercer far than tear the things of clay?

Hastings, November 2nd, 1842.

BRITAIN.

GIRDLED by azure waves, how fair it lies
Amid the western sea! Yet its grey shore,
Slow ages, and their years unnumbered, saw
Go by to the dark past, lost to all eyes
In its abysses, but keen memory's,
Ere, hushed, primeval nature, wondering, o'er
The blue sea, viewed the white-winged barks, that bore
The savage strangers to its coasts, uprise.
Homeless they came: fear made them bold to dare
The fury of the roaring deep. No more
Dwelt solitude and silence only, where,
Save nature, none companioned them of yore.
And now,—where stood its forests, cities stand,
And nations leave its shores to people many a land.

November 10th, 1842.

WRITTEN AT HASTINGS.

1

MAJESTIC ocean, hail to thee! Again
I gaze upon thy tumbling waves, once more
I tread, with joyous steps, thy sounding shore.
Thrice three long winters the bright leaves have slain,
On autumn's golden trees, since, hoary main,
I left thee last. In darkness to thy shore
I came; thy mantle was the night. I saw
Thee not; but not thy thunder-voice, in vain,
Told of thy power and might, and such deep awe
Stole over me, as, on the darkening side
Of some lone mountain, I have felt. Before
Me, now, thy billows roll in light, and wide
And far they race along the heaving seas,
And toss their foam-white manes, and battle with the breeze.

October 23rd, 1842.

2

SILENCE sits throned upon the voiceless deep:
How changed since yesterday! then the wild roar
Of billows, numberless, the echoing shore
Flung back with deafening clamour. Hushed in sleep
The bellowing surges lie: no more they sweep,
Rank upon rank, with savage cries, to war,
While their white plumes of feathery foam dance o'er
Their hosts, by howling winds high tost. They leap
To scale earth's beetling battlements no more,
Beneath whose rushing forms marched on the night.
Not the same ocean seems it that we saw
So lately: scarce a ripple rocks the light,
Or mighty shadows, that come down to rest,
From the white, brooding, clouds that float above its breast.

November 12th, 1842.

WRITTEN IN GREENWICH PARK.

The earth o'erflows with gladness: nature makes
No thing she wills not, living, to enjoy
Delights that suit its nature. "Cares annoy,
"Disease torments, and haggard misery shakes
"The strength of manhood in us; sorrow takes
"Its dwelling often with us; some alloy
"Our happiness hath surely?" Yes,—yet joy
And life were meant for one. The sunshine wakes
The insect, in the wilderness of grass,
To know but pleasure through its life-long day.
Existence were but gladness, did we pass
On to its goal but learning to obey
Its natural laws. If known, not kept, alas,
Are these, and hence such ills infest our way.

September 17th, 1843.

HATE none, though the wild cry of blood should ring
Through the affrighted land; though the fierce stare
Of eyes that seek their hunted victim glare
Before thee; though, with never-tiring wing,
Hatred should shadow earth, and vengeance cling
To the red murderer's track, yet do thou dare
To preach, to men's deaf ears, of mercy. Care
Thou not, though thy meek, heaven-sprung, words should bring
Around thee yells from those who pity not,
Who hide their thirst to slay beneath the law,
And, shouting "Justice," onward hound the hot
And bloody chase. Though he who flies before
Need, like to the fell tiger, bars, yet still
Speak thou, and cease not, "Men, ye shall not kill."

November 19th, 1842.

HATE none, but do thou rather pity those
Whom men call guilty. Peer in to yon cell,—
There lies the murderer: that dreary bell
Tolls the swift death of his few moments. Close
The grate, and hear me. Men and he were foes
Even from his very birth; that man could tell
Of none of those sweet, childish, joys, so well
Our memory loves to prattle of. No,—blows,
From hands that should but have caressed him, crushed
Into his infant heart the love again,
That would then freely, ceaselessly, have gushed
To mingle with affection. Were it vain
To tell how mental darkness was his lot?
Hunger, despair, and crime?——O hate him not!

November 19th, 1842.

SCORN none, but look upon the poor, the low,
The toiling, nay, the guilty, but with eyes
Where pity sits with gentle tears. Be wise
Ye who, strong in the pride of what ye know,
Dare, on the dark in mind, to trample. Go,
Ponder and learn true wisdom, nor despise
One of your fellows, for, in him, there lies
The might of thought; sweet fancies sleep below
His careworn, wrinkled brows, that would have broke,
Perchance, into sweet words, if, like to ye,
Knowledge, his birthright, had, in childhood, woke
Them from their dreaming slumbers. Think, to be
Like him, your lot might have been. Pour not gall
Into his bitter cup.——Scorn none! love all!

November 19th, 1842.

JUDGE none, for know your vision is all blind
Bent on another's actions to decide
How guilty is the doer. What shall guide,
Unerringly, your search for what his mind
Deems evil, or thinks good? Is he confined
To test his actions by the guage applied
By you? Not so. If man be justified
(Although condemned he be by all his kind)
To his own thoughts, unjust is your false blame:
From all reproach of man should he be free.
You say his deeds are ill. Thinks he the same?
If not, the circumstances blame, with me,
That made him evil hold for good: for thou,
With nurture like to his, hadst been as he is now.

June 26th, 1843.

BY our own standard do we measure men,
Not by their own as we, more justly, ought.
Come, ponder with me, you, in your own thought,
All pure and spotless, sternly judging, when
You deem a fellow mortal errs. Do you ken
The truth of this your guage? How it was wrought
Can tell me? No. Chance formed your standard.
Nought
Of difference can there possibly be, then,
In that which others to their deeds apply,
Ay, even to your own. Judge none, for know
Of circumstance is conscience born and nigh,
Your virtues, vices are in others' sight.
Blameless is he who does what he himself holds right.

June 25th, 1843.

VAIN of thy titled name, laugh not the low,
Who lack thy lordly rank, proud man, to scorn.
Come, wilt thou reckon with me who have worn
The jewelled robes, thou so delight'st to show,
Among the wisest of past ages? No.
The gauds that thee, and such as thee, adorn,
Not oft the sacred forms of those have borne
Whom the earth hails its greatest. Scorner, go,
Search the bright records of the glorious past,
And, when thou seest one threatening thy dim eyes,
With his excelling glory, blind to blast,
Demand of him, before thee, if there lies
The brand of low birth on him,—if his fame
Was clouded by a title-tinselled name.

November 19th, 1842.

HOLIER is love than wisdom, if the wise
Not unto love their wisdom consecrate.
O that mankind might feel how truly great
Are they who, in despair's dull, moody, eyes,
Have kindled joy!—they who have changed the sighs
To gladness, of the captive!—whom the grate,
Of the doomed murderer's cell, with love, not hate,
Hath opened to admit, when all the ties,
That bound the felon to his kind, were snapt,
And curses, mingling with man's hated name,
Rained from his quivering lips, have, entering, wrapt
Meek patience round them, sat them on the same
Stone bench, beside the doomed, and, in his ears,
Have poured kind, pitying, words, and with him mingled tears.

November 19th, 1842.

Do good and cease not, though the pleasant praise
Of those you benefit reward you not;
Though all the deeds you do the wretched lot
Of suffering humanity, to raise
To happiness,—to make the weary days
Of those who grieve among your fellows, what
All perfect love would wish them,—be forgot
By those whose rugged paths, through life, to ways
Of pleasantness and joy your hands have turned;
Though each, whose bitter tears into sweet smiles
Your words have changed, whose children should have learned
To lisp their father's gratitude, reviles
You to the listening world, move, like a God,
Still, onward: be your life its own reward.

November 22nd, 1842.

Envy their eyes to sightless blindness sears,
When peaceful greatness among men is seen;
So is it now—so has it ever been.
Strange, a man may, from human hate and fears,
Hew out a name, which, when his fellow hears,
He shall, at once, hail glorious,—shall screen
From blighting calumny, and strive still green,
Unwithering, to keep, although the tears
Start to a thousand dull, dim, aged, eyes,
As their old ears the deeds he did drink in,
While each, in vain, from the deep sorrow tries
To wean him that the childless feel. They win
Men's ungrudged plaudits, whose false glory dies:
Slander waits those whose fame through ages still shall rise.

November 17th, 1842.

STRENGTH-EATING toil lays its cold grasp on life,
Devouring, with keen appetite, the day;
Scowls on sweet sleep, that, from the weary strife,
Snatches the o'erworn artizan away,—
Steeps him in blessed oblivion,—strips bare
His mind from the close-clinging curse of thought,—
Beams, through the heavy thunder-clouds of care,
O'er-shadowing his way, light, pleasure-fraught.
Toil hates the slumbrous reign of ancient night,
Yea, envies man the God-given Sabbath's rest:
Gaunt poverty strains in his leash, to fright
His groaning slaves, with hunger, dreaded guest,
Gnawing, with bloody teeth, his fleshless hand.
Oh! earth were heaven, without this hellish band!

February, 1841.

Is man made but for toil? "Yes," do they say
Who know not labour; "nor should man rebel
"Against the will of him who bade him dwell
"In misery upon the earth;—his way"
(O God how weary!) "he should tread, away
"Thrusting all impious murmurings, that tell
"Of vain repinings." If life be a hell
To all he holds most dear,—if every day
Up call her whom he loved, and loves, so well,
The sunshine in the gloom of his dark home,
Pain to endure and want, till eve farewell,
Bid to the world again,—if he must sell
His little ones' weak infancy for bread,
Should he yet be content, nor wish that he were dead?

November 20th, 1842.

'Tis false, God made not man for toil alone,
To labour on, from the first break of dawn,
Till dewy eve come down. Well might he mourn
His weary lot, were such his fate. O own,
If through life, thus, he were foredoomed to groan,
Ye who, content with happiness, dare say
Content should dwell with all, that well might they
Whom misery calls her own, almost, atone,
By such a life, for curses, if they raised
Their toiling hands against the heavens in hate,
And hurled up to the God they should have praised,
In words, whirled on to madness by their fate,
Wild imprecations through the trembling sky.
They blaspheme God——Man should not toil and die.

November 20th, 1842.

By the sweet beauty of yon bending sky,—
By the dark, gorgeous, majesty of night,—
By the unutterable glory bright
In all its thousand starry worlds,—yea, by
The ocean of the gleaming light, on high,
Rolling its billows o'er them, in the sight
Of mortals, burying them down in the white,
Pellucid, depths of its clear waves,—they lie,
Who say the All-good, whose word made man, hath said,
That never-ending toil should be the lot
Of all the generations that the dead
Shall gather to their slumbering hosts. No, not,
For this, lives thought in man. If God meant ne'er
Man should rejoice, why made he earth so fair?

November 20th, 1842.

CONTENT!——O hate it, for it is a thing
The happy praise to make the wretched be
In love with hunger and with misery;
To make the many, to whom their days bring
But toil, unceasing toil, unmurmuring, cling
To their most bitter fate, and strive to see
The will of the benignant Deity
In their dark lot. Content!——The word might sting
The toiling millions in their strength to rise,
Nor longer crouch beneath the evil rule
Of those who cramp their mighty energies.
O man, be not a mere, unreasoning, tool
To labour on till death! God never meant
You thus should live! They sin who are content!

November 24th, 1842.

To tread the earth not far above the brutes
That, dull and soulless, crop its fields of grass;
Eat, drink, and labour, till the bounds we pass
Of life to death, and learn how little boots
All that we made the aim of life—the fruits
Of toil, to taste their worthlessness, alas,
For this, why yoke we us to toil? The ass,
The grazing ass, is driven to labour. Roots,
The earth, untilled, affords,—the running stream,
These were the luxuries of Socrates.
Rich food to please the palate, a fond dream
Of pride in costly house or clothes, are these
Things that should be to us the highest good?
O life, thy end is all misunderstood!

June 9th, 1843.

FOR what do we, to trade, our best days sell?
What have we for the hours that we employ
In these dull occupations, but annoy,
And blushes of the mind, not cheek, that tell
How petty are the shifts men hold it well,
For gold, to stoop to? "Nay, but there's the joy,
"The wealth your hands are gaining brings,—alloy,
Has all the happiness man tastes,—'tis well,"
The world says, "with you, if this be your own."
Alas! alas! what are the pleasures worth,
This gold, that men so thirst for, gives alone?
To tickle our false pride with show, the earth,
To ransack for our palates, shall we give
Our days, when we the life of mind may live?

June 10th, 1843.

O, MANY an hour, my restless thoughts would dwell
Upon the nothingness of what men hold
The good, supreme, of life,—the pleasures gold
Can purchase for our appetites, or swell
Our bloated pride with. Oft I said, farewell,
Methinks, 'twere better far to bid, with bold,
Determined, scorn to worldliness, and old
To grow in the chase of wisdom, than to sell,
For pleasures that I care not for, that, won,
Debase but those possessing them, my days.
Dare to be poor, I said, to show that one
Disdains, alike, the world's false scorn or praise;
The scorn that dogs the thread-bare coat, scorn thou:
Thy mind's own make the hours the chase of wealth claims now.

June 10th, 1843.

SAY, what is it to live, thou child of clay?
It is not, like the unseen, wandering, wind,
To come from whence thou know'st not, and, behind,
No record of thy being leave, to say
Thou wert and art not,—dawn and fade away,
'Mid things, that memory knows not of, to find
A resting-place for thy earth-troubled mind.
Call it not life—they do not live who play
A soulless part upon the earth we tread,
Who eat, drink, sleep, till the fore-destined day
On which they join the legions of the dead,—
Who toil for joys they loathe in beasts they slay,
Nor rouse the godlike powers that in them dwell,
In burning words, ennobling thoughts to tell.

May 23rd, 1842.

WHO truly lives?—Man, fleeting shadow, tell.
He lives who is a pure, clear, fount of love,—
An earthly image of his God above,—
From whom unselfish sympathy will well,
Unceasingly, for woe, and higher swell
With godlike pity for the wretched, born
To wither 'neath the world's dread, blasting, scorn,—
Who comes, a Howard, upon earth, to dwell.
He, truly, lives who, nobly, dares to tread
Upon his brutish appetites,—to hold
Converse with nature, and the deathless dead,—
To toil, through nights and days, not for the gold
That men so thirst for, but, more wise, to be
A thought and wonder to futurity.

May 23rd, 1842.

WHEN cherished hope becomes reality,
How often comes a moment when joy seems,
Like that the sleeper tastes in empty dreams,
So worthless, that our pleasures seem to be
As baseless as our visions. Then we see
The vanity of all things. The mind deems,
Like the eastern, sated, sage, that joy's light streams
Down, only, upon earth in misery
And night to lose itself. Are pain and tears,
And suffering and despair, alone then real?
No,—still take heart again: chase off such fears.
The greatest happiness that man can feel,
Lies in the striving for it, and the thought,
If that we strive for good, we have not lived for nought.

May 29th, 1843.

THE riddle of existence, ponder. What
Shall woo to man, on earth, sweet happiness?
Shall make our dreaded chance of misery less?
Our hopes more real than fancies? Know we not
Some way the tangles of our life to unknot,
And make its thread run smoothly? No,—then guess,—
Let 's ponder out an answer; let us bless
Our darkness with some light, though it be got,
Unreal all, from dreaming phantasy.
Of that we seek for, glimpses are there none,
In this?—" Make ever young life's end to be,
" To weld its hopes and duties into one;
" To find the path it was foredestined to,
" And one make what it should and it would do."

June 9th, 1843.

DUST unto dust!——The breathing form, that trod,
With stately step and regal port, the earth,
Death moulders to what 'twas before its birth.
Swiftly the past entombs man's years. This god
Of earth commingles with the trodden clod,
Forgotten. O, if pity kill not mirth,
Spirits, that know not death, in him, jest, worth
Their smiles, must find, for, lo, one dreams his nod
Should bow his fellows, formed, like him, to dwell,
Coequal, each, with all; nay, with such awe
He hedges his mortality,—so well
He apes divinity, that none, before
His footstool, crouch not down,—none dare to be,
In speech as well as thought, as nature made them, free.

November 9th, 1842.

OF this be sure, the false shall surely die,
The true endure as surely. This shall find
Each mighty truth that one far-seeing mind
Moulds for the future, in obscurity,
At times denied even hope to satisfy
His spirit's slender wants. That truth, consigned,
Amid the jeers and mockings of his kind,
To bless the world through all eternity,
Its way through time it takes—the world is blind—
Its portion, folly's laugh and wisdom's scorn,
As, on, it, lonely, journeys, still behind,
Upon its steps, it hears. Yet, whilst you mourn
The blindness of the age, despair no wit,—
Men, surely, shall, in years, grow up to it.

June 25th, 1843.

WHAT is the leash you strain on? Why not slip
Yourself upon the track of bright renown,
And, nobly, breathe your powers to hunt it down?
Who knows but that you may, at length, outstrip,
If passionate desire you, onward, whip,
The fiery-footed glory? Dread no frown
From envious fate; he never won the crown
Of priceless fame, who, basely, feared to trip,
And blenched from the open course. What holds you back?
On, on, with hot desire and hope, on, press;
Believe, for you, the future will not lack,
If, fitly, you demand, from it, success?
What if you fail? the very strife shall give,
To you, the life of life, lost, if you listless live.

June 13th, 1843.

FAME for the prize, what holds you from the race?
Why slumber through the number of your days,
As if, to you, but bitter were the praise
That men can offer? Why not strive to place
Your thoughts amongst the memories of your race?
To make your words their own? You may not blaze
A light unto the future, yet to raise,
But once, upon a fellow-creature's face,
A smile of unmixed happiness, were sweet,—
To fire the unlit thought of only one,
Living or yet to live, whose eyes should meet
The words your hands have traced, this to have done
Were good and pleasant. On, then, toil to gain
A name, to tell you have not lived in vain.

June 13th, 1843.

A VALENTINE.

MILD * * * *, gentlest of a sisterhood
That walk the earth in beauty, to mine eye
Fair as the moon, silvering old ocean's flood
With her calm smiles, from night's blue cloudless sky,
When, in the dance, thy steps made melody,
Sweet as remembered music, or the sigh
Breathed by Eolian lyre, when night winds, nigh,
Woo it from silence, "Would," I said, "that I
"Might thy years, yet to come, with mine own bind!
"Then, like the pale, star-sprinkled, jessamine,
"That, round a lowly cottage-porch, will wind
"With such close clasp as love alone can twine,
"Wouldst thou wreath pleasure round my every day:
"Ah! would my hopes might wing so high their way!"

February, 1841.

WITH A FAREWELL PRESENT.

Go, eloquent of one she sees not, be,
To her who quits her childhood's home, to dwell
Far, far, from all so long she loved so well,
A visible, enduring, memory
Of him, perchance, who not again shall see
Her form of beauty. That light step, that fell
In music on his ear, no more shall tell
The coming of mirth-bearing hours, for she,
Whose presence, like spring flowers, or sunshine, still
Made pleasure haunt our homes, departs afar.
Go thou,—with her depart,—full would I fill,
With recollections, thee,—old thoughts that are
Dear to thy sender,—that, before her eyes,
Should bid, in after years, sweet hours, departed, rise.

January 21st, 1843.

TO ————.

I KNOW you not, although, perchance, my eye
Has, in my daily walks, a moment, seen
Your passing form,—my steps, perchance, have been
Checked, for a moment, as you glided by,
To note your natural grace. Methinks, you lie,
A nameless thought, among my thoughts, and wean,
At times, my fancy, hovering between
The present and the past, with memory,
To wander among recollections fair.
I know you not, yet would your life should be
Fair as your face or form. May always care
Be, as I am, a stranger. May years see
Smiles only your companions; and each hour,
While dancing by, but pleasures on you shower.

June 17th, 1843.

TO ————

AMID the dream of life, you still have been,
Among fair forms, the fairest to my thought.
No form so lovely, by the cunning wrought
Of beauty-moulding nature, have I seen;
And, though, perchance, at times, some face might wean
My fancy from your own, oh, never aught,
For long, could keep it from your beauty—naught
Of loveliness, for long, could ever screen
Your own from its fond gaze:—through many years,
Companion of my thoughts, 'twas yours to dwell,
Although you knew it not. The hopes, the fears,
Ay, all my boyhood's daily dreams could tell,
How, with them, mingled still the thought of you,
And, with the growth of years, but stronger grew.

June 6th, 1843.

STILL dwell with me sweet Hope and Memory.
With Hope, into futurity, I 'll wing
My way, through dim obscurity, and fling
A radiance over shadows, which the eye,
Joylit, sees, at sweet Fancy's call, flit by.
Dreams shall seem truth, and, to delusion, cling
My thoughts, around the visions clustering,
Till, like pale spectres when morn comes, they fly,
Scared from my mind by stern reality,
And leave me mourning that so swiftly fled
The joys my mind created. Memory,
Through years no more, I 'll wander, by thee led,
And, gaze on joys, on sorrows past, nor weep,
For time hath lulled the tears they waked to sleep.

July 14th, 1842.

SWEET Poesy, oh, do thou not disdain
With me, though all unworthy, still to dwell.
Thou know'st, fair spirit, that I love thee well,
Far more than aught beside. Oh still remain,—
Forsake me not. I court thee not that, vain
Of thy revealings, I with pride may swell,
Exalted o'er my fellows. Not to tell,
Unto a listening world, thy words again,
Do I entreat thee still to haunt my way—
With thy loved presence to illumine still
My lowly dwelling. If, with me, thou stay,
As I have ever loved, so ever will
I love thee, not that widely may be known
My name, but for thy own sweet sake alone.

November 28th, 1842.

I LOVE a laugh,—of all things, I love best
A hearty laugh, the trumpet-note of joy,
That sounds, to sadness and to dull annoy,
All thoughts that sadden and all cares that infest
Our daily life, defiance,—that can wrest,
Making the man again the very boy,
Its owlish look from wisdom, and its coy,
Its world-taught iciness, that trembles lest
Good laughter, merry, sounding, laughter, be
Too natural for its gentlemanly look,
Too low, God wot, for nice gentility,
From the cold face that 's merry but by book,
That laughs by rule, just so much and no more:
To mask good laughter's vile—I love its hearty roar.

September 18th, 1843.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING THE LIBRARY OF THE GREENWICH SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

TREAD, with awe, its lowly floor,
Though no signs of greatness tell,
There shall shades whom men adore,—
Thoughts immortal, there shall dwell.

Not of marble are the walls,
Not bedecked with gold or stone,
Yet bow down,—not lordly halls
Hold the great of earth alone.

Who are they who yonder dwell?
Who the great who there abide?
Names unnumbered memories tell,—
Names the nations own with pride.

Earth hath all of them she gave,
Dust is all that e'er can die;
There live they who have no grave,
Their's is immortality.

There are thoughts of other days,
Fancies born in ages fled,
Burning words poured forth to praise
Deeds, whose doers are the dead,—

Eloquence, of might to fire
Athens to be free,—that stirred
Philip's soul with fear and ire,—
Words that kingless Romans heard.

Songs are there that floated o'er
Tempe's vale, Ilyssus' stream,—
Wisdom, heard, of old, with awe,
In the groves of Academe.

Would'st thou fain escape from care?
Fain from haunting memory fly?
Magic spells shall guard thee there,—
Pain and sorrow come not nigh.

Through fair lands, in waking dreams,
By the sweet-tongued poets seen,
Waving groves, and winding streams,
Fields, than earth's, of brighter green.

Through the sun-lit haunts of smiles,
Where the tears of earth are not,
Where a spell thy mind beguiles,
Thou shalt wander, earth forgot.

Shapes, like gods, that Milton saw,
Forms, that Spenser bade arise,
Passions, that unveiled before
Shakspeare's genius-frenzied eyes,

There, at thy command, shall come,
Chasing all life's clouds away,
Bidding bitter thoughts be dumb,
Bidding gladness with thee stay.

Pour the song—their praises sing
Who shall ne'er forgotten be,—
Trod they not the earth to fling
Glory o'er humanity?

Weak the sway of regal birth,
Sceptre, throne, and diadem,
Weighed with theirs. Who rule thee, earth,
And thy dwellers, like to them?

Not, to them, with stifled hate,
Or with fear, do men bow down:
Need they pomp to speak them great,
Priceless robe, or jewelled crown?

Whence is man? His spirit tells,
By desires that soar—from God.
Whence? the form in which he dwells
Links him to the trodden clod.

O'er the fleeting dust it wears,
Kings may hold a fear-wrung sway,
But the heaven-born spirit dares
E'en the mightiest disobey.

Great the wise, for they alone
O'er the mind unquestioned reign.
Thought, no power but thought will own,—
Mind, no mortal's will can chain.

Weave for them the choral song,
Hail their names, whose magic power
Can, till earth shall die, prolong
Beauty born for one brief hour.

Hymn their fame, who beauty shower
Over mountain, vale, and moor;
Sweeter make earth's loveliest flower,
Dreader ocean's stormy roar.

Dost thou in the world endure
Wealth's contempt—the rich man's sneer?
There, no scorn shall dog the poor,—
There, no taunt shall misery fear.

Art thou one, fore-doomed to bear,
Toiling on, the proud man's scorn?
Go—enthroned in glory, there
See the wise—the lowly born.

Scorned, like thee, in ages past,
There, like earth-sprung gods, they dwell.
Was their lot with monarchs cast?
Of their rank do nations tell?

No, through life, their course they ran,
Noble made by mind alone.
Who, the brotherhood of man,
Them adoring, shall not own?

Who that knows what earthly lot
Hath the doom of genius been,
One to scorn shall tremble not,
Though the lowliest, meanest seen?

Toss the choral strain along,
Bounding on from voice to voice;
Fling to heaven the storm of song—
Hope is man's—rejoice! rejoice!

SONG

SUGGESTED BY THE OPENING OF THE NEW BUILDING OF THE GREENWICH SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

"LET there be Light," the Eternal said;
Night trembling heard,—the darkness fled,—
Earth rolled in light along.
Each leafy wood—each flowery plain—
The murmuring winds—the dashing main,
Poured forth their joy in song.

Then burst forth from grassy hill,
From each bubbling fount and rill,
And mountain-shadowed vale,
Earth's thousand voices, blending
In chorus never ending,
The new-born day to hail.

Light comes! rejoice! the mists that blind
Man to the powers of his own mind
Are rolling fast away;
Swift-coming years shall see earth trod
By beings nearer to their God
Than e'er were born of clay.
Sing—the night of mind is past,
Sing—the morning comes at last,
Sing—with choral song,
Joyous hail the breaking dawn,
High, to greet the coming morn,
Toss the strain along.

April 23rd, 1842.

WITH mad delight,
And meteor flight,
The earth flashes forth from the darkness of night;
Cleaving its way
Through the ocean of day,
It bathes in the light, and it bounds away;
As it glides along,
A mingling throng
Of unnumbered sounds zone its form with song,
The dash of its seas,
The voice of its trees,
The soft sweet laugh of the wandering breeze,

Forests' wild moans,
The deep, low, groans
That dying storms breathe,—the thunder-loud tones
Of the sea-lashed shore,
The eternal roar
Of mist-robed cataracts, flinging them o'er
Earthquake-cleft mountains,
The bubbling of fountains,
The sound of the dance of soft, pattering, rains;
In the air blending,
Sounds never-ending,
Weaving earth's song, are for ever ascending;
And, whirling along,
Bright sisters, the throng
Of worlds back are tossing, rejoicing, the song.

March 15th, 1842.

CHRISTMAS SONGS.

1

COME, raise a stave to Christmas, Jem,
Though now no revelry,
And roaring wassail, welcome him,
As in the days gone by;
We'll greet him still, Jem, as of yore.
Let those who will go sigh,—
Our days shall be like days no more,
Our nights like nights gone by.

No more a thousand antlered walls,
And oaken roofs, resound
The roar that through old England's halls,
With foaming ale went round;

We quaff not from the flowing horn,
  Yet we'll disdain to sigh
As much as men of days long gone,
  And Christmas nights past by.

Although no more our mirth be told
  By many a boisterous game,
That tears of laughter raised of old,
  When jolly Christmas came,
With laughter loud we'll greet him, Jem,—
  Let fools go mope and sigh,—
With dance and song we'll welcome him,
  As in old years gone by.

And when our heads are whiter, Jem,
  Than winter's drifting snows,
Our hearts shall still grow lighter, Jem,
  Whene'er the old year goes;
For age to freeze our mirth, in vain,
  To sadness still shall try,—
In talk we'll live old days again,
  And merry nights gone by.

Fair forms, that are but infants now,
  Our eyes shall swim before,
When years our forms shall downwards bow,
  And we may bound no more;
Yet, then, the dance we'll see them weave,
  With scarce a single sigh,—
In thought the present scene we'll leave,
  And bound through nights gone by.

Young eyes shall speak to answering eyes,
  When ours, perchance, are dim,—
Hands, hands, shall press,—sighs rise to sighs,
  While we're unheeded, Jem;

Yet we'll grow young, while each shall tell
To each, with brightening eye,
Of those more fair who loved us well,
In pleasant days gone by.

With laughter loud and mirthful song,
Then hail old Christmas still,
While dance his hours of life along,
We'll frolic come what will.
The present, while our youth shall last,
Shall never hear us sigh;
In years of age we'll seek the past,
And live in days gone by.

December 24th, 1842.

2

AWAY with care—away,—
A word he is not worth,
Who asks of us to-day
A reason for our mirth;
We'll banish tears and sighs
Till days long, long, hereafter,
If sorrow dare to rise,
Why kill it straight with laughter.

Let none, with owlish air
Of wisdom in his face,
Bring hither sullen care,—
Let this be folly's place.
Who quotes a printed page
Let him not hope to stay;
The merriest is most sage,
So laugh with us to-day.

There are who'd make our age
  Too wise to smile, but they
Are only truly sage
  Who laugh while laugh they may;
Of such, each one's an ass,
  Not wise as we by half,
Who'd have it come to pass
  That all the world should laugh.

Why's earth so green below?
  Why's heaven so blue above?
Why's all so fair?—to show
  We're made to laugh and love.
Tears,—keep them for the morrow,—
  A fig for him, I say,
Who will the greybeard sorrow
  Not mock with us to-day.

Of yore he won the prize
  Who best the ale could quaff,
But we'll hold him most wise,
  The loudest who can laugh.
We'll plunder dance and song
  Of all their mirth, nor fling,
While bound the hours along,
  Away one joy they bring.

December 25th, 1842.

SONG.

WHAT pleasure can match the delight that we find
When fairy-like fancies are flitting to light,
And thoughts, streaming up from the depths of the mind,
Put souls into words and unveil to our sight?

Then, drunk with sweet frenzy, how fast from the eye,
Thought-lit, vanish all things we late saw below,
Concealed by the forms that are wandering by,—
The shapes that, at fancy's low call, come and go!

Will ye match me, with this, the delights of the earth?
The joys that the juice of the grape can bestow?
Can the blood of the vine to a rapture give birth,
Like thought's inspiration or fancy's rich glow?

'T is rapture to roam with a daughter of earth
When the night-stars burn dim by the eyes that we love,
Yet are ages of passion that one moment worth,
When the poet goes rapt to the heavens above?

No—let care haunt my way—let distress be my lot,
So poesy with me disdain not to dwell,—
What matter? all else shall, with it, be forgot,—
If the god stir within me, I care not,—'t is well.

November 11th, 1842.

Can he, the frail, weak, child of clay,—
The passer to the tomb,
Tear cold oblivion's grasp away,
And trample down his doom?

Can he, who treads the earth and dies,
Fore-doomed to whence he came,
Stamp uncreated memories
With his fast-fleeting name?

He comes,—he walks the earth,—he dies,—
Loved,—wept for, and forgot,—
Can power be his to haunt the eyes
Of those who yet are not?

Yon fleecy cloud floats out of night,
On, by the winged winds, borne,—
It veils the moon,—it sails in light,—
In night again 't is gone.

So passes man: can he by aught
Proclaim he once hath been?
Or make himself an unborn thought
To those earth hath not seen?

Yes—man, who comes fore-doomed to die,
Can grapple with his doom,—
Can grasp an immortality,
And triumph o'er the tomb.

Yes—he, this fleeting thing of clay,
Oblivion can defy:
The wild winds with his dust may play,—
His thoughts shall never die.

The earth may know his step no more,—
The dwelling of high thought,
His form, the turf may blossom o'er,—
His bones in vain be sought.

Yet shall each lofty, thought-souled, word
He traced, proclaim his name,—
Each new-born race of earth be heard
To hymn his deathless fame.

Look towards east—see, how the night
Is dappled with the dawn,—
Yon rosy beams of quivering light
Proclaim the coming morn.

We soon shall see the glorious sun,
Begirt with flashing light,
Up roll,—before it shall be none
Who veil not, then, their sight.

So is it with the mighty dead,
As ages roll along,
Fresh glory by their names is shed,—
Fresh tongues their praise prolong.

May 7th, 1842.

WHERE is the majesty by earth,
In years departed, worn?
The forms of beauty that had birth
In buried ages?—Gone.

Gone,—like the summer cloud's light shade,
On wafted by the wind,
That dappled field and sunny glade,
But left no trace behind.

Gone,—like the gorgeous hues of gold,
That steeped the deep in flame,
Till past the sun in glory rolled,
And starred night westward came.

Gone,—gone,—and memory knows them not,—
Oblivion o'er them flings
Forgetfulness, and thus forgot
Shall be all lovely things.

It is not so, still, still, they live,
But doomed with earth to die,—
Mind grasped the power their forms to give
To immortality.

Earth's loveliness but lives to die,—
Like some sweet dream it flies;
Yet man, before futurity,
Can bid the past arise.

May 21st, 1842.

THERE IS BEAUTY IN ALL.*

THERE is beauty on earth,—there is beauty in heaven,—
From their earliest birth, our Creator has given
Sweet beauty to all that 's above and around,
From the unnumbered stars, to the dew-spangled ground;
There is beauty in all.

From the earliest dawn, to the sun's highest noon,—
From the dark, solemn, night, to the pale, peaceful, moon,—
From the planets, which roll through unlimited space,
To the simple wild-flower with its exquisite grace;
There is beauty in all.

There is beauty above,—there is beauty below,—
From the sea's coral caves, to the hills, capped with snow,—
From the murmuring stream, to the foaming cascade,
And the broad, rolling, ocean, in grandeur arrayed;
There is beauty in all.

From the ice-covered North, with its magical night,
To the fair, sunny, South, all so joyous and bright,
That the mind is entranced and with beauty oppressed,—
From the warm, spicy, East, to the verdure-clad West;
There is beauty in all.

In the freshness of youth,—in its innocent grace,—
In the locks of old age,—in its pale, furrowed, face,—
In our last solemn sleep, when we yield up our breath,—
There is beauty in life,—there is beauty in death;
There is beauty in all.

* This and the three succeeding pieces are the composition of a Brother of the Writer of the foregoing Sonnets.

HOPE.

THE night has come,—the day is o'er,—
The busy hum is heard no more,—
The nightingale her tuneful song,
O'er hill and dale, will now prolong;—
The day is o'er.

The pale, round, moon, with peaceful light,
Dispels the gloom of solemn night,—
The flowers have closed their dewy eyes,—
The world, reposed in silence, lies;—
The day is o'er.

But soon the day will come again,—
The sunbeams play, o'er hill and plain,—
The shadowy night will pass away,—
And all look bright, and glad, and gay;—
The day will come.

So hope will play around the tomb,—
So glorious day dispel its gloom,—
So we shall rise and wing our way,
Through yonder skies, to brighter day;—
The day will come.

THE FACTORY-CHILD'S MAY-DAY SONG.

All nature is joyful. Then, why are not we?
And gracefully dancing each flower and tree:
From the bright, sunny, sky, to the blue, waving, sea,
All are cheerful and happy. Then, why are not we?

All nature is ringing with music around,—
Sky, woods, hills, and vales, with rich music resound;
And all, from the murmuring breeze, to the sea,
Re-echo their gladness. Then, why should not we?

Ah! no.—We must rise, with the earliest dawn,
To endure a fresh day of starvation and scorn,
And the glorious sun has long sunk in the west,
Ere we reach our poor homes, and from weariness rest.

Not for us are the bright, sunny, sky, and green fields,
And the peace, and the gladness, which fair nature yields;
But ignorance, poverty, toil, and disdain,
Till disease, and the grave, close a short life of pain.

THE STARVING MAN'S PRAYER.

"O LORD, have mercy on a wretched man,
Of hope bereft, whose life's diminished span
Has well nigh closed. Almighty God, release
My spirit from its woes, and grant me peace.
O how have I deserved this bitter fate?
In misery born, from earliest dawn till late,
I've struggled hard to live, and now——to die,
And hear my starving child's half-stifled cry
(While I lie here in death's long, painful, strife)
For a poor morsel to sustain it. Life
To me is worthless:—what is life to me?
Want without hope,—a lingering agony,—
And death?——how sweet if he, with me, could die,
And want, temptation, crime, and misery fly!
Together let us rest beneath the sod,
Freed from oppression, trusting in thee, God.
Then welcome death, though more than mortal pains
Torment my frame, though fever scorch my veins,
Without one single groan, complaint, or sigh,
As calmly as an infant I could die."

He, fainting, paused, but, slowly, spoke at length.
" My eyes grow dim : my child, if you have strength,
Give me your hand, and let me look upon
Those lovely features, though so pale and wan,
Once more, before I die.——All still as death ?
No sound ?—All silent ?—Not a gasping breath
To tell me you are near ?——He 's with the dead :
Nor want, or sorrow, want of needful bread,
Or man, will ever now torment him more.——
I die in peace,—our miseries are o'er.

NOTES.

NOTE A, p. 9.—The ambassadors sent by Darius to demand of Sparta earth and water, its citizens flung into its wells. Evil omens affrighted Lacedæmon. In the general assembly was demanded, who would die for their country. To expiate the murder of its heralds, Sperthies and Bulis offered themselves to the vengeance of Persia. Hydarnes, governor of Asia Minor, counselling them to save themselves by serving the great king, they answered, "Knew you how sweet a thing liberty is, you yourself would counsel us to preserve it."

NOTE B, p. 14.—Impeached, in 1629, by Charles I, for defending the popular rights in the House of Commons, and convicted by Judges commanded by the Court, Sir John Elliot refused to own himself guilty, or to pay the fine imposed upon him, preferring to remain in prison, where he died.

NOTE C, p. 19.—Makanna (the Mahomet of the Caffers) roused the tribes of his nation, in 1818, to drive out the Europeans from the Cape. Foiled in their attack on Graham's Town, dispersing, they sought shelter in the woods, while various expeditions of the English and Dutch Boors, ravaged their country. To save his nation from destruction, Makanna voluntarily gave himself up to his enemies.

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